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EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

Routing Slip

TO:		ACTION	INFO	DATE	INITIAL
1	DCI				
2	DDCI		✓		
3	EXDIR				
4	D/ICS		✓		
5	DDI		✓		
6	DDA				
7	DDO				
8	DDS&T		✓		
9	Chm/NIC				
10	GC				
11	IG				
12	Compt				
13	D/EEO				
14	D/Pers				
15	D/OEA				
16	C/PAD/OEA				
17	SA/IA				
18	AO/DCI				
19	C/IPD/OIS				
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	SUSPENSE		Date		

Remarks:

STAT

Executive Secretary

7/29/83

Date

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National Aeronautics and
Space Administration

Washington, D.C.
20546

Office of the Administrator

Executive Registry
83-3854

JUL 27 1983

Honorable Paul W. Thayer
Deputy Secretary of Defense
The Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Paul:

As we approach the August 8 SIG(Space) meeting and the August 22 NSC meeting on the National Space Strategy, I think it is important for us to clarify some issues that have surfaced recently.

As you know, NASA strongly believes that the President should commit the US to building a Space Station. This belief flows in part from our analysis (in conjunction with private industry) that the vast majority of existing and projected civil and commercial space requirements are best satisfied by a permanently manned Space Station. The percentage of these requirements that are better served by extending the duration of Shuttle flights is very small. On the other hand, recent statements appear to be indicating a national security community preference for extending Shuttle flight duration. Because of the dearth of civil and commercial requirements for such a capability, I believe it would be necessary to justify such a request on the basis of national security requirements.

On another issue, as you recall, in February the President decided not to procure a fifth Shuttle Orbiter. Instead he decided to produce Orbiter spares in order to maintain Orbiter production capability. At the same time, he noted that a future decision to procure a fifth Orbiter would depend on the demand for Shuttle launches. Although I believe that the nation will need to procure a fifth Shuttle Orbiter at some time in the near future, I do not currently plan to ask for it as part of NASA's FY1985 budget because I do not believe that current projections of civil and commercial launch requirements warrant it. Nonetheless, I recognize that the Space Transportation System is the primary launch system for national security as well as civil missions. While I am in the process of making my final decisions regarding NASA's FY1985 budget request, I wanted to let you know what my thoughts were on this issue.

25th Anniversary
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There is another aspect of the Space Transportation System which you and I have talked about. The National Space Policy makes clear that the Space Transportation System is the primary space launch system for all national security and civil government missions. As the nation's Expendable Launch Vehicle programs are phased out, however, concerns have been expressed regarding assured launch capability, particularly in the event of some catastrophe in the Shuttle program or in times of crisis and conflict. The answer to these concerns lies within the Space Transportation System. The availability of Shuttle Solid Rocket Boosters permits the timely development of unmanned Shuttle-derived launch vehicles. Such launch vehicles could provide performance levels to satisfy national requirements, could allow greater launch site flexibility, and could present cost-effective replacements for today's Deltas, Atlases and Titans. Furthermore, this approach to providing assured launch capability is fully supportive of the President's commitment to the Space Transportation System. I would like to talk to you about this subject in more detail in the near future.

With best personal regards.

Sincerely,

James M. Beggs
Administrator

cc:
Honorable William Clark
Mr. John McMahon

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